

Access to information in Communities and Local Government - Internal review procedures

Requests for information made to Communities and Local Government are considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or, for environmental information, the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

This leaflet explains what to do if you are not satisfied with the handling of, or response to, a request for information you have made to Communities and Local Government or a Government Office (GO) which is part of the Department. Separate procedures apply to a request for information made to one of the Department's executive agencies

If you wish to complain about the handling by Communities and Local Government or a Government Office of your request for information or the outcome then you should write, clearly stating the reasons for your dissatisfaction to:

Communities and Local Government
FOI Advice Team
Zone 2/A3, 2nd Floor
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Or e-mail: xxxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx.xxx.xx

The FOI Advice Team will send you an acknowledgement on receipt of your request. We will make every effort to respond by the 20th working day. However, in very complex cases, or where a large volume of material is involved, the reviewer may require longer than this to ensure that he or she is able fully to consider all the issues and evidence. Once the reviewer has had the opportunity to take an initial view based on the amount of material in this case and any requirement for outside consultation with other bodies, we will write to you again should it appear likely that we will be unable to meet this target date. In any event this should not exceed the 40th working day.

A review officer, from a different business area of the Department from the area that dealt with your original request, and who will not have had involvement in the consideration of that request, will be appointed to conduct a full re-evaluation of the handling of your request and the reasons for the decision. A complaint about a request handled by a GO will normally be considered by a review officer in a different GO. The letter you receive in response will be from the appointed review officer.

If the decision of the review officer is to wholly or partially uphold your complaint then you will be advised of any action that needs to be taken by the Department. If the decision of the review officer is that information previously withheld should be released then you will also be told when you can expect to receive that information if it is not provided with the review officer's response.

If the review officer has not upheld your complaint, or you remain otherwise dissatisfied with the Department's decision, then you may apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision or assessment at:

Office of the Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

E-mail: xxxx@xxx.xxx.gov.uk
Telephone: 01625 545700
Fax: 01625 524510